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ABSTRACT

This study examined reflective writing as a vehicle for learning through the use of dialogue journals to synthesize relevant classroom materials and help students examine multicultural issues. Thirty-one elementary education students enrolled in a course titled "Foundations of Education in a Multicultural Society" participated in the study. The dialogue journals are analyzed in terms of literal understanding, lack of understanding, self in context, evaluation, implementation, new insights, and heightened awareness, with eight case studies summarized in detail. Analysis showed that students preferred to write showing literal understanding, while they less frequently explored issues in terms of new insights and heightened awareness. Many students reported having trouble finding the time for the journals. The expected written conversation between student and instructor did not happen, as the instructor's feedback questions seemed to encourage reflection rather than written response; still some students found the journal a valuable way to communicate one-on-one with the instructor. The journals did not hold the same value for all students, though the journals were perceived by all students as a safe environment in which to vent frustrations and explore feelings. Some students seemed to lack an understanding of reflection and never went beyond a literal level in their journals. Based on the findings, the following conclusions are suggested: (1) the dialogue journal has the capability to allow both the preservice teacher and teacher educator to work together closely; (2) trust is an important element in the collaboration between teacher educator and student; (3) students need a definition of reflection and should be taught how to use reflection in their journals; and (4) the dialogue journal provides an important voice for the preservice teacher to share thoughts one-on-one with an interested listener. Specific recommendations and suggestions for using dialogue journals are included. (Contains 33 references.) (ND)

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Case Studies of the the Dialogue Journal in Multicultural Education

Introduction

The purpose of this naturalistic research was to investigate the dialogue journal within the context of multicultural education. This study examined reflective writing as a vehicle for learning through the use of the dialogue journal to synthesize relevant classroom materials and to help students examine multicultural issues. Dialogue Journals are an ongoing, written "conversation" between the student and the instructor back and forth for an extended period of time. Although the the teacher may direct the topic, the student has some freedom in response to the given topic. A definition of "reflection" for the purposes of this paper would be to connect/interpret/define/ conceptualize/compare/contrast/analyze/classify/evaluate old constructs of knowledge into new constructs for the purposes of understanding, changing, and storing information.

The question that framed this study was, What was the effect of the dialogue journal on students in multicultural education? First, the pre and post scores on a Cultural Sensitivity Instrument given the first and last day showed a mean difference of +3.68. Such a difference indicates a positive effect, but not a large effect. The scores from eight case studies were as varied as +21 and -13 mean difference; yet such a score does not provide us with much information on the effects of the dialogue journal alone. For a more comprehensive view of the dialogue journal, it would be necessary to turn to a content analysis of the entries. Much like the Cultural Sensitivity Instrument, the results are disappointing. Finally, a summation of eight case studies are presented which may help to explain many of the reasons why the mean difference increased slightly and why such discrepancies would appear among students. Before the case studies and other findings are explored; however, a brief summary of the background that supports this study is necessary .

Background

America's teachers are in dire need of multicultural training. Currently, 90 percent of teachers are Anglo, and in elementary schools, 80 percent are Anglo and female, (Sleeter and Grant, 1988, p. 23) who have not been exposed to cultures other than their own (Grant, 1989). Steiner and Leacock (cited in Banks and Banks, 1989) find that when the background of the teacher is different from the students, the classroom becomes a center of tension and anxiety that is felt by both.

Research in multicultural teacher preparation shows that a semester class in multicultural education can provide a baseline of information but changes in attitude require more in-depth training (Baker 1972, 1977; Grant and Koskela, 1986; Bennett et al, 1988, 1989). Yet, in most teacher preparation departments across the country, one semester course is all that is offered.

The initial question stated, How can we prepare our preservice teachers for the multicultural classroom? Before such research could be set in motion, a fundamental understanding of why some students make it in the educational system while others do not was needed. Multicultural education, alone, provides little explanation on why cultural and academic inequalities pervade the educational classroom. Critical Pedagogy, as a theoretical framework, helps to explain such discrepancies to both preservice and seasoned educators who need to look for answers to such disturbing questions.

Theoretical Frameworks

Critical pedagogy provides a framework, questions, objectives, assumptions, and model to explain how power and politics enter the nation's classroom. As a theoretical framework, critical pedagogy helps both teacher and student develop an awareness of inequalities (within the school as a microcosm of society), understand why such inequalities exist, and encourage methods and language as tools to

become empowered. The teacher in this context can be seen as a cultural transmitter and agent who serves the purpose of a critical examiner to help students explore individual and societal roles in which the classroom becomes a laboratory. In the laboratory of the classroom, students learn to analyze their reality and the reality of others. The dialogue journal may be one such tool that may help students become critically examine their roles and the roles of others through writing.

Critical pedagogy also places great emphasis on the importance of language to understand the fundamental relationship of how power and politics play important roles in one's position in society. Freire, well known for his work in literacy in third world Countries, believes that critical pedagogy begins with the power of the word and its interpretive meaning based on the individual's scope of experiences. Language then becomes a vehicle to make meaning of the world. Freire believes that comprehending the written word can lead an individual to social transformation and "critical consciousness" (Freire, 1985; Freire and Macedo, 1987).

Vygotsky's theories overlap critical pedagogy by stressing the importance of the developmental process of thought and language. Both views state that language grows developmentally based on one's experiences and their interpretations. Vygotsky (1962) explained that "inner speech" was a cognitive process that must be be pulled apart, analyzed, and reworked into more explicit meaning to be turned into written communication. What is of particular interest is Vygotsky's theory (1978) of the "Zone of Proximal Development" which states that the learner has two different levels: a level of actual development and a level of potential development. Potential development is guided by the assistance of one with more expertise. Through Vygotsky's "Zone of Proximal Development," the students' level of language, thought, and problem-solving ability grow with the help of a trusted expert such as a teacher-educator.

If Vygotsky's (1962) theory that thought and language are constantly developing and therefore changing, then thought and language hinge on one's experiences and interpretations of meaning. It is here that the teacher-educator can encourage students to connect facts, concepts, and strategies that they are learning in class to their own personal experiences through the use of the dialogue journal (Hettich, 1990).

The researcher chose to investigate the use of the dialogue journal versus any other form of journaling because of the value of the mentorship relationship between the teacher educator and the preservice teacher. Other researchers using the dialogue journal have found such a collaborative relationship to be beneficial (Bullough & Gitlin, 1989; Knowles, 1991).

Methodology

Data was collected during the Spring semester of 1991, from thirty-one elementary education students enrolled in INST 322: Foundations of Education in a Multicultural Society, a required course taken in the senior year. The course focuses on the historical, social, and philosophical concerns regarding education in a pluralistic society. The course met two hours each day for four weeks. The students were also enrolled in a social studies methods course during the same four week period. As part of a new program in teacher education, students met for four hours each day for four weeks before entering ten weeks of student teaching.

Upon the initial meeting of this first group of "new program" students, much data was collected. This teacher/researcher administered the Daly-Miller Test for Writing Apprehension and a Cultural Sensitivity Inventory (post test followed on the last day) to determine which students would be chosen for further research. Based on a comprehensive analysis of the data on the first day, eight students were selected for case studies.

Dialogue journals were collected from all students once a week, read, and returned with comments. Journal categories were developed inductively after the research was collected. The analysis did not begin with theories or hypotheses, but instead used inductive reasoning to interpret and analyze data into meaningful categories. Such "grounded theory" does not precede data but rather such theory emerges as a consequence of the data.

For the purposes of this study, categories were developed by the "constant comparative method" developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Using this method, coding is directly compared to previous data in the same and different categories as a comparison and contrast analysis that eventually forms the properties to be classified. Glaser and Strauss, however, go beyond the initial stages of classifying data for the purposes of generating "grounded theory."

Triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was accomplished through the use of multiple data sources for the case studies. Besides the dialogue journal, personal data was obtained through initial profile surveys, autobiographies, and interviews. Other sources included daily course work (collected and analyzed for grading throughout the course), and course evaluations (collected during the midterm, final class, and eight weeks after the class had ended). An ongoing analysis of the data was conducted by the teacher/researcher. Peer debriefing and member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were used throughout the study to check validity of all documents.

What had not been anticipated within the original design of the study was the impact that a new teacher education program (Texas Senate Bill 994) had on the class. The researcher had noted from students the anxieties and complaints about the new program throughout the four weeks. Often the students animosity towards the new program got in the way of their learning. Such changes had not been anticipated prior to this research; therefore, the researcher was forced to make many changes during the collection of data.

Categories in Journal Entries

For a more comprehensive view of the dialogue journal, it is necessary to turn to a content analysis of the entries. The entries that were selected for this study included any topics that were covered in class as well as the students' background knowledge and experiences that relate to multicultural issues. (Several of the students had prior courses in bilingual education with a strong emphasis in multicultural education.) The length of the entries was confined to the kernel of multicultural reference. In some cases the kernel was one paragraph; in other cases, one page. The selection process of the entries emerged from within the data simultaneously with the necessary decision-making required of the researcher.

The following classification scheme begins with examples that show **no display of multicultural understanding** for various reasons stated. The second category shows examples of a **literal understanding**. The third category of examples, **self in context** makes reference to self or to family within a multicultural context. The next category shows examples of **evaluations, implementations, and observations. Evaluations** allow the students to react to the readings, discussions, lectures, or videos. **Implementation** allows students to focus on what they would do as a practitioner in the classroom. With **Observations**, students write what they see and critique what they have noted in the elementary classroom. All of the examples listed under **New Understandings** specify what new knowledge students have learned and explored in their revelations. The last category, **Heightened Awareness**, contains examples of students who show some struggle only to arrive at some greater multicultural understanding. (Please note that many of the entries can span two or more categories. Writing is a complex activity that often is difficult to categorize.)

CATEGORIES OF MULTICULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

NO DISPLAY OF UNDERSTANDING-No demonstration of multicultural understanding in which the student may display:

-naive interpretation that shows no understanding of multicultural issues
-personal view that shows no understanding of multicultural education.
-incorrect information that shows error in multicultural understanding.

I find it interesting how we learn. I feel ashamed that I know only one language. I want to become fluent in other languages as well. I want to learn and then when I have children, I want to speak these languages so they can learn them naturally. I know this cannot happen though because I cannot learn the language in full in order to be able to use them with my kids although I will try because it is actually a lacking quality to be fluent in only one language. If I can provide the environment & speak the language, we could become fluent together. I also want to put my child into foreign language classes beginning at the elementary ages. **(naive understanding of learning a language)**

I enjoyed the discussion led by the guest speakers, and I do agree with every thing that they said. I agree the [that] we should be culturally aware of others so we can understand where they are coming from -- but the thing that gets me is all of this equal rights stuff. If these people want to be treated differently because of their ethnic background then why the heck do they keep fighting about discrimination. In alot [a lot] of cases I feel that reverse discrimination is a common practice and an accepted practice. I guess that I feel this way because I was raised with an acceptance of other cultures in a culturally diverse society. It really <u>urks</u> me to have discrimination in either direction. Why can't we just look at ourselves as people who are all human beings. We come from different backgrounds but we should also recognize that no culture is better than another - we are <u>just people,</u> period. **(personal view / naive understanding)**

When you learn language it is outside the brain. So a second language is also outside the brain. ... When learning a second language, you usually develop the academic skill first and then the social skill. **(incorrect information)**

LITERAL UNDERSTANDING - Demonstration of a literal understanding of multicultural issues that many involve:

-repetition of learned facts
-summary of information from readings, lectures, or discussions.
-observations in classroom with no elaboration or interpretation.

I think it is very interesting to find out about students' different learning styles. Our learning experience would be dull if we all learned the same way. We have to have all types of learning styles to make the world go around. Each learning style is very important. After you find

out the different learning styles, you could do some fun activities with them. **(repetition of facts)**

[Name withheld] talked about students who are 'at-risk' of dropping out of school. He had us brainstorm about who is 'at-risk.' The class decided that almost anyone in school is 'at-risk' of dropping out. Next, the class began to list things that put children at-risk of dropping out. Some things mentioned were: single-parent homes, poverty, unemployed parents, parents with low education, and peer pressure. The class discussed why and how these things affected children. This part of the discussion flowed well. **(summary of information)**

Mrs. Shearon teaches nineteen fourth graders at South Knoll. There are 10 girls and 9 boys, and there is quite a racial mixture in the classroom. One girl is from Mexico, and another girl is from Taiwan. There are two black children, one boy and one girl. They are both in the process of being tested for special education. **(observations in the classroom with no elaboration)**

SELF IN CONTEXT - Reference to self or to family within a multicultural context that may include:

-family reference
-self-disclosure
-past decisions or future goals

My father is from France and my mom is from Germany, which makes me a first-generation American. I completed grades 1-10 while living overseas in the Caribbean. **(family reference)**

Kids are labeled incredibly efficient [wrong word]. I know I will be very aware of this; I was labeled as an athlete, which I only fit partially, and I could see exactly how kids may feel when they are labeled. Labels and kids don't match -- give them a chance. I will! **(self-disclosure)**

I chose reading as my specialty because I understand why children can have a hard time with it. I have been there myself and have had to work through it to become the kind of student I am today. **(future goals)**

EVALUATIONS/OBSERVATIONS/IMPLEMENTATIONS

Evaluations - Stated opinions of readings, discussions, lectures, or videos used during the class.

The handouts they [the speakers] gave us were good. They must have spent a lot of time on them. I especially liked the story about Teddy. It really highlighted the fact that teachers need to get to know their students and take outside factors into consideration, instead of hastily labeling them. **(evaluation)**

Most of the material we had already heard. One thing I did notice they [the speakers] left out almost a whole continent, India and the Middle East. What about those students? They are really not Asian-Americans? I did like the way she [the speaker] did the labels. I think that is a good way [to] illustrate the point. **(evaluation)**

Implementation - Hypothetical examples are addressed on how student would carry out learning activity in the future classroom.

I would first try to learn why he [child from Columbia] won't look up or speak. If it is because of his culture, I would respect him and let him continue the behavior. If it is because he is shy, I would try to make the classroom a safe environment and win his trust. I would find out about his culture by reading books, observing, and talking with his parents. If he refused to speak to me for the rest of the semester, I might encourage him to write down questions. I would also try to learn non-verbal signals from the child. **(Implementation)**

I would teach some background information on certain Indian tribes (perhaps focusing on the ones that the Native American children in my classroom belong to). Then I would stress that Native Americans no longer live in teepees and wear loin cloths. They now live pretty much like everyone else. They wear jeans and live in apartments. I would stress that Native Americans have a special heritage that they should cherish and be proud of. I would have the Native American children in my classes (if they were willing) give presentations to the class about their favorite parts of their culture. I would emphasize that Native Americans were the first American, and they have the same rights as everyone else. **(Implementation)**

Observations - Recorded observations are made and critiqued by preservice teacher of intended classroom, students, or activities.

I am not a teacher, but I did see some things that I would have tied into the lesson or even to the overall classroom. They were talking about a matter in social studies which could have incorporated the Gulf situation into it. **(observations)**

Today I saw the neatest lesson. We went to class in the morning so I got to see the reading lesson. The story that was studied was Are Your Arms One Hundred Years Old. This is a story about a Black woman and her nephew. The woman has Alzheimers disease. The story is written in dialect. [Name withheld] pointed this out to the students. A discussion of different dialects started. She pointed out that there are different dialects in the classroom. She said she spoke different from them. She speaks different than other teachers in the hall. She is different than the other fourth grade teachers. She is Black. And she told them that. She said she can hug them, and she won't rub off. She is clean and doesn't smell bad. She said she likes to eat cornbread and pinto beans, and she is not ashamed of that. She said that she likes corn tortillas and flour tortillas. If she was Hispanic, she would be proud of that too. She said it is just as good to be Black as White. She said there are beautiful Black people and smart Black people. She said that everyone should be

proud of who they are and the way they were raised. The best part about it was the way students reacted. One little girl who is Black was obviously affected. She was on the edge of her seat and a smile as big as Dallas was on her face. Another Black girl may have been a bit embarrassed. The Hispanic students loved it when she told about their culture. I think the biggest part of this was that the teacher that they so highly respected was saying it is okay you are not White, you are still very special. I think that is the most valuable lesson I've seen all semester, and I am glad I was allowed to see it. **(observations)**

NEW INSIGHTS - Stated new understanding or insight from the processing of readings or discussions.

While I was reading the Native American chapters, I learned a lot of things that I had never been exposed to before. I'm sure some of the facts about how Indians were treated so badly by the White man were included in my textbook, but that was never really stressed. I learned a lot about the different tribes, where they lived, what they ate, etc. Mostly it was stereotypical stuff. But I really enjoyed reading the chapters. They opened my eyes to a lot of issues that I didn't remember or hadn't ever learned about. **(new insights from readings)**

I have really been thinking about how to reach Black students in the classroom. I am glad [name withheld] addressed the issues of Black people in history. I guess I just focussed on the "big five." This gave me some insight on just how to present materials to the students. To say I was not aware that a problem existed would be stupid. Of course a problem exists, but now to deal with it I feel like I have some resources. [Name withheld] said some things that made me think I know that different styles of management should be used, but they are not always done. I need to find the techniques that work with all students. **(new insight from lecturer)**

HEIGHTENED AWARENESS - Stated heightened awareness that shows both a struggle to understand and an arrival at some greater understanding of multicultural education.

I have been really getting to know some of the students in [name withheld] class because I have been tutoring them. I worked with Kashotue twice already. She is a Black girl who is way behind the rest of the class in reading and math proficiency. She was tested to see if she qualified for special education. Unfortunately she scored just above the cut off, so she can't receive the special education benefits. If she continues in the same pattern, she will fall farther and farther behind until [until] it is too late for anyone to do anything. She is really eager to learn, but she [needs] lots of one on one interaction. ... I also worked with Broderick. He is a Black boy who was also tested for special education. He did qualify, but the parents still have to give consent. ... It sure is sad that the only two Black children in the class are being tested for special education. It might lead students and teachers alike to assume that their is some sort of relation between their race and their learning difficulties. **(heighted awareness)**

> Some times I think people look at their life and think it so good that they think it is the only way, and others do things wrong and put their children at-risk. No one wants to be poor. No one wants their child to fail. ... Now my job is to look within myself and in my surroundings to find out what I can do to lessen the risk factor. ... I want to help everyone without exception to do well. Not say, well, Johnny is a little slow, but it is not his fault or its okay. I don't want Johnny to be slow. I want him to do well in school. I just don't know how to do it, and rather than debate it, I wish we'd find some answers. ... We as educators cannot judge. We are not there to judge or point the finger. We are there to help. It is our job to teach the students, not some, but all of them. As we learned today, we must do this by making the lessons exciting and important to all the students in the class. We have to make them [the students] want to come back for more. **(heighten awareness)**

Content analysis was completed on eight students' journals for the purposes of the case studies. Nineteen entries were analyzed from each journal. Of the 152 entries, 59 showed no multicultural reference and 12 entries were missing. The following shows the frequency of categories in the remaining 77 multicultural entries:

No Display of MC Understanding	**4**
Literal Understanding	**22**
Self in Context	**5**
Evaluations/Implementations/Observations	
Evaluations	**13**
Implementations	**17**
Observations	**7**
New Insights	**7**
Heightened Awareness	**2**

As the frequency count shows, most students prefered to write showing a **literal understanding**. It appears that students need to repeat, summarize, and paraphrase information from readings, lectures, discussions, or simple observations. The second most popular category was **implementation**. This can be explained by the fact that students were rightfully preoccupied with student teaching that began at the close of the four week classes. The third most frequent category was **Evaluation.** This category came as no surprize. The students can react in their journals in a straightforward manner by expressing their opinions on the materials used in class. What did come as a surprize was the less frequented entries in which students explore the issues in **new insights** and **heightened awareness**. Such categories would show evidence that students can

explore the issues in many different directions and begin to develop a "critical consciousness" through writing.

Specifically, **lack of understanding,** shows examples of students who do not explore the issues for various reasons. The researcher believes that the first two examples illustrate students who have not kept up with the readings and use the journals to go off on a tangent. These entries show no substance. As research has shown, perhaps such students are not developmentally ready to explore multicultural issues (Bennett,1990; Niggle, 1989; McGeehan, 1983). The last example, however, shows the instructor that the student is trying to comprehend the material but had difficulty. Such a lack of understanding can be more easily corrected by conversing with the student or writing a response in the journal.

One question remains as to why many students did not choose to explore the issues through reflective journal writing, excluding problems with comprehension. Perhaps the only way that students do not explore is if they are apprehensive about writing, dislike this form of writing, or do not perceive that they have enough time. Some students were like one student who stated, "I hate writing. I have never liked to write. I have no confidence in writing. I can do it --the content. I know what I want to say. But when it is written on paper, I have no confidence." Several other students reported that they did not have enough time to devote to journal writing with the stress of the four weeks. The desire to explore and the sufficient time to explore are essential for developing an awareness of social inequalities in education.

Findings on the Use of the Dialogue Journal

Case Studies

Although the results of the Cultural Sensitivity Instrument and results of the dialogue journal were disappointing, a summation of eight case studies will be presented which may help to explain many

of the reasons why such discrepancies appear among students. Within the case studies, comments on journals received mixed reactions. Initially, all comments were very positive during the mid-term evaluation. Perhaps during the interviews, students were able to talk more openly about the positive and negative features of the dialogue journal. The following is a synopsis of the various thoughts of students on the dialogue journal that were taken from he case studies.

KB, who had the highest score (355) on the Cultural Sensitivity Instrument, confided that she did not use her dialogue journal to her fullest potential because she was taking six hours in four weeks, working a part-time job in the evenings, and observing in the elementary classroom everyday. (Students were required to observe twice a week.) She prefered to write in class because it did not feel like "just another assignment to do." In general, KB thought the idea of the dialogue journal was beneficial "even if the journal just reaches a few students in the class." KB explained that the journal was not very helpful since she was already very verbal about the issues in class; however, she found great merit in recording her classroom observations and would do so regardless of whether such observations were required or not. Although KB did not value the dialogue journal other than recording classroom observations, she, nevertheless, showed a wide range of entries in **literal understanding, evaluation,observation, implementation,** as well as entries in **new insights**, and **heightened awareness**. She was the only student of the eight case studies, that showed a negative mean difference of -13 on her pre and post Cultural Sensitivity Scores. KB indicated during an interview that she had already had two prior courses in multicultural education and felt that she was well prepared for the culturally diverse classroom. Perhaps the four week class, which may have had too much overlap with her prior courses, had a negative effect on her learning.

KA, who represented the median score (145) on the Cultural Sensitivity Instrument, had never taken a multicultural class. She

found the journals to be "effective" though she was not able to put the time and energy into the journals that she wanted. She explained that the journal was often the last on her list after the readings and other required work such as research presentations and lesson plans. With limited time, she stated, "Right now I don't like writing in the journal, but I know later on it will be nice to look back on. I will really enjoy the classroom observations." The classroom observations were the most helpful, and she planed to continue them through student teaching. In class, she did not want to voice her opinions; therefore, the journal became her platform for reflection. She elaborated that generally "people felt freer in the journals to express their frustrations and their concerns than they did in the classroom [discussions]." Finally, KA did not think that journals were a crucial component except for the value of classroom observations. She explained, however, that the journals helped her to reflect on the articles and speakers for her own purposes though she feels she would have learned a lot even without the journal. KA showed a mean gain of +2 on her Cultural Sensitivity Instrument. In her journal, she showed an average range of entries which may have been a result of her limited time and energy. The entries included: **no display of literal understanding, literal, self in context, evaluation**, and **implementation**

JL, who scored the lowest (14) on the Cultural Sensitivity Instrument, had never had a multicultural class. JL perhaps benefitted the most in that she felt the journal really helped her to learn the material since she was far behind the rest of the class. She explains, "I like the idea of a journal. It gives you the chance to put your ideas and feelings down on paper." The journal provided JL with a safe place to paraphrase new information. She did not feel threaten in the journal because she knew there was no right or wrong answer because "it was just your feelings." She also enjoyed the encouraging remarks that were written in her journal by the instructor. JL who did not participate in class discussions, felt that the journal helped her because "of where I was" and because "writing makes you stop and think" about the materials. JL wanted to continue her journal

during her student teaching practicum so she could explore the new material within a safe place. JL did complain that she was " tired some days" and did not want to write in her journal. JL showed the most positive mean gain of +21 on the Cultural Sensitivity Instrument. Perhaps such a score reflected more how far JL had come and needed to come to prepare herself for the culturally diverse classroom. Most of her journal entries reflected a **literal understanding.**

CR, who scored the highest (100) on the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument, explained during the midterm evaluation, "I love to write in my journal." Later, he stated that the journals "benefited me more personally than academically to think about the issues" though he wrote very little in his journals and skipped many of the required entries. CR explained he had trouble with certain types of entries such as the hypothetical examples of the "Child from Columbia" without experience in the classroom. CR, however, prefered the journals to class discussions: "Overall I thought the journals would give you more time to air yourself and to respond and think." CR found the journal to "have a place in the classroom" provided there is "a longer period of time" and more time to "share what we wrote." Although CR did not show much work in his journal, CR showed a positive mean difference of +12 on the Cultural Sensitivity Instrument. The researcher got the impression that although CR had taken other classes with a multicultural component, this was the first time that he had explored some of the issues. Within CR's dialogue journal, he showed a display of **literal understandings, self in context, evaluation, and implementation, observation**, and **new insight.**

Overall SL, who represented the median range (78) on the Daly/Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument, viewed the journal in a positive light. She explains in her mid-term evaluation, "The journals take up a lot of time to write, but it is a good place for me to write down what I am feeling and thinking." SL used her journal "to reflect on things that you might not of thought of before." SL had a

difficult time writing and thinking in class because of the distractions so she used the journal as a tool that could be stopped and started several times during the day as she need more time to think. SL felt the journals were a safer forum than class discussions when one goes public. Classroom observations were the most beneficial for her. In the end, SL felt the journals were personally helpful but not a necessity to the class in which she felt she would have learned as much without the journals. SL showed a mean difference of +3 on her Cultural Sensitivity Instrument. Within her dialogue journal, entries ware categorized in **evaluation, implementation, observation, and new insight**.

TR, who scored the lowest (44) on the Daly/Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument, hated to write. She especially hated to write on "something I am told to write on." She enjoyed using the journal as a catharsis to vent frustrations when she could "release all the frustrations of the day." She attributed her hatred of writing to dyslexia and needed to find her own personal meaning in order to write. She viewed writing "as a chore" and would rather "talk it out." TR concludes that she would use the journal in multicultural education but " . . . I would not make them [the student] write . . . [by] . . . restricting them to a topic." TR already took a great interest in multicultural issues before she began this class. Although she did not show much work in her journal, her class comments were sophisticated in her prior knowledge of multicultural education. Perhaps TR showed a mean difference of +3 on her Cultural Sensitivity Instrument because she was already well acquainted with the issues. Within her dialogue journal, entries included: **literal, self-in-context, evaluation, implementation**, and **observation**.

AC, who was the most international student in the class and had not taken any multicultural classes, explained that journals were an excellent way to communicate with the instructor one on one, especially for "taking out frustrations" during a trying four week and help[ing] us pull everything together." She suggested that the journals could have been better incorporated into class. AC would

have prefered that the journal assignment be given in the beginning of class and extended into the evening as more of a "question of the day." AC implied that she did not work well under pressure; therefore, time in class to write was simply not enough. Often, she used the journal questions to focus on her assigned readings. Many times AC explained her need for more structure, particularly during the observations in the elementary classroom. AC, being an international student and from a family of mixed cultures, already had a wide knowledge of multicultural issues even though she had never taken such a course. She showed a mean difference of only +1 on the Cultural Sensitivity Instrument which may explain the fact that her international experiences had been her teacher even before the class. Within AC's dialogue journal, she showed the widest range of entries that included: **literal understanding, self in context, evaluation, implementation, new insights, and heightened awareness.**

DM, who was chosen for this study because she openly demonstrated much irritability over multicultural issues in discussions and journals, enjoyed using the journal as an outlet for her feelings, but not as an avenue for learning. Often the journal was used for exploring what she wanted versus the assigned topic, i.e., the entry on bilingual education. DM also found the journal to be a safe haven to explore her feelings that she did not find in the harsh, critical environment during class discussions. [Many students had complained that DM was using class time to vent her personal prejudices.] DM believed the class would have worked just as well without the journal "just because of the circumstances of the class [stress and time.]" She expressed that journals would have been more effective during a normal 16 week semester. DM showed a mean difference of +2 on the Cultural Sensitivity Instrument which may be explained by the little work and much anxiety she experienced in the four weeks. Within DM's journal, she showed: **no display of literal understanding, literal, implementation, and observations.**

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Effects of the New Program

There was much resistance to the new program, and as a result there was also resistance to the class and to the dialogue journal. Originally, the researcher set out to have students write daily in their journals, but after the first few days saw that this expectation was too much for the students. Other components crowded the journal: text readings, readings from a collection of articles, research presentations, and classroom observations that students conducted twice a week. Often students reported that they could not find enough time to use the dialogue journal as much as they wanted with all of the pressing demands. Students rightfully became overwhelmed by two required classes in four weeks.

The students were asked to identify Bloom's taxonomy in their journals so that they would be cognizant of the various levels other than the knowledge level. The researcher abandoned the idea of having students label their entries with Bloom's taxonomy in the margin. It was too difficult for them to learn and to identify the levels in their own writing with the chaos of four weeks. Hettich (1990) found this taxonomy to be a successful meta-cognitive tool, but the objectives and practice must be repeated as often as needed.

Lack of Dialogue in the Journal

The interactive, ongoing, written "conservation" between the student and the instructor did not happen. Perhaps students would have benefited from more examples given in the beginning of class as well as more emphasis in setting the stage of "written conversation" between the student and the instructor. Examples had been given in the beginning; however, the students got off to a bad start from the confusion of the new program.

The researcher responded to the entries with mostly reflective questions as feedback that perhaps students felt was unnecessary to answer. The questions were used to get students to think further about an issue and could have been perceived as rhetorical questions that did not need a direct answer. KA responded during an interview on why she did not use this interactive process in her journal:

> I did respond. I responded to myself. I read your questions and I responded. I didn't put it on paper. I was going to but I didn't. But then I started writing the next journal. A lot of times when I was writing in the journal, I would think of questions and answer them. Sometimes I wouldn't put it down and sometimes I would as if I could figure out an answer.

It appeared from the journal entries that students were already conditioned as to the format of the journal and proceeded with what they already knew best, given the stress of the four weeks. It is paramount that both students and instructor come to a shared understanding of the meaning of the dialogue journal as well as examples of the kind of exchanges that can be written between student and instructor if the dialogue journals are to be meaningful. This activity would probably dominate several days in the beginning of a semester.

Preconceived Ideas of Journals

The results of this study parallel other findings that students come to journaling with preconceived ideas of what a journal should look like based on their former experiences (Klenck, 1991; Schmidt & Martin, 1991). The instructor's prior experience with journaling is important as well as how the instructor perceives the journal should be written (Rust, 1988; Klenck, 1991; Knowles, 1991) Students need to be shown how the journal is collaborative in dialogue rather that a personal journal (Schmidt & Martin, 1991.) In this study, the researcher found that little time was taken to introduce the dialogue

journals and discuss preconceived ideas of the journal before introducing the concept of the dialogue journal.

Time Restraints

The results of this study parallel other findings that preservice teachers felt that keeping a journal was very time consuming in and of itself (Klenck,1991). Those students who supported the use of the dialogue journal were emphatic that a 16 week semester would be needed as well as more time encouraging and sharing entries in the classroom.

With all the other requirements of the class, the dialogue journal did not take the priority that the researcher had anticipated. Perhaps there were just too many demands placed on the students for the journals to take any place of importance. The semester was much too short to begin a written conversation that was to have an impact.

Students may need to think about a topic for a period of time before they write. Writing topics may be given in class, but the instructor should not expect all students to have completed the entry in class. Findings from this study show that many students would prefer to be given the day to think about the topic in which they may complete their writing in the evening when they are more relaxed.

Value of Journals

This study clearly supports earlier findings that journal writing is not for everyone (Charvoz, Crow & Knowles, 1988). Journals do not hold the same value for all students. Some students such as JL, SL, AC, and KA found writing to be used to collect thoughts, reflect on ideas, and vent feelings. DM, TR, and CR prefered to use the journal only to vent feelings. KB, KA, and SL found the classroom observations to be the most beneficial. All three will continue voluntarily to record their observations into student teaching. TR hated writing in the journal unless she was given the freedom to write what she wanted.

Nature of the Questions

Often the journal entries would depend on the nature of the questions or topic. Assigned topics (that ask for a more specific answer) did not have the variety of interpretations of free responses topics (in which the questions can be interpreted in many ways). Some questions lent themselves to particular responses. The more closed question as "Child from Columbia" only allowed an implementation response and even then the answers were predictable. Free response questions that may ask students to write their reactions to a guest lecturer elicited much more variety of responses from students. Often the responses represented a great range of categories. Some students complained that they need the structure of specific questions while others do not. Perhaps if teacher-educators are to help students develop an awareness of inequalities that exist and how to overcome them in the classroom, it is important that the teacher-educator realize the impact of questions given and how such questions will effect the possibility of students' responses.

Several of the entries did not contain a multicultural reference. When students were asked to write "about their favorite teacher," they did not make any multicultural references. A second example involved the observations recorded in a culturally pluralistic classrooms. Few multicultural references were made in the journal. Perhaps, in the first example, students do not make the connection between "favorite teacher" and multicultural incidents since most students (64 percent) grew up in the suburbs where classes were "mostly White." In classroom observations, students preferred to list a chronology of what happened that day with few references to what they were learning in their multicultural class. Perhaps the materials from readings, lectures, and discussions were not being absorbed because of the frantic pace of the four weeks.

Lack of a Definition of Reflection

Several students (JL, CR, DM) were never able to move beyond a literal level in their journal. In retrospect, the researcher questioned whether students understood the concept of "reflection." Initially, the researcher assumed that students would know that the journal was used for reflectional purposes among others. It must be noted that the students had not been instructed or given any definition of "reflection" before writing in their journals.

Knowles (1991b) discusses how teacher educators are often not careful to define concepts they use and to make sure that the definitions are understood by students. Definitions are too often implied. (An definition of "reflection" for the purposes of this class would be to connect/interpret/define/conceptualize/compare/ contrast/analyze/classify/evaluate old constructs of knowledge into new constructs for the purposes of understanding, changing, and storing information.)

Value of Reflection

Some preservice teachers (CR, DM) appeared not to value the exercise of reading articles and text, thinking about what they had learned, and writing reflections in journals. Many students were too busy being anxious about the four week semester and delay of student teaching. Such students (CR, DM) wrote long, lengthy anecdotes that had little to do with the topic, i.e., bilingual education. Reading, writing and thinking take time which was a commodity that many did not feel they had the luxury of during the four weeks.

Certainly, other students (KB, KA, JL, SL, AC) valued reflection though they felt pressed for time. KB prefered to write her reflections in class since she did not have time at home with her busy schedule. KA's journal helped her to reflect on the articles and speakers for her own purposes. JL felt that the journal helped her because "writing makes you stop and think" about the materials. SL used her journal

"to reflect on things that you might not of thought of before." AC found that the journals "help[ed] us pull everything together."

The results of this study seem to parallel the findings of previous researchers who state that many preservice teachers simply do not value reflection and feel they do not need to practice reflection to operate in the classroom while other preservice teachers do (Johnson, 1987; Schmidt & Martin, 1991).

Opportunity for Feedback

Several students reported that journals were an excellent way to communicate with the instructor one on one. JL, who felt continuously behind in the class, felt encouraged by the remarks that were written in her journal by the instructor. AC felt that journals were an excellent way to communicate with the instructor one on one, especially for "taking out frustrations."

Journals as a Safe Environment

Journals were perceived by all students as a safe haven to vent frustrations and explore feelings. Several students, JL, SL, AC, and KA, found the journals to be a safer forum to express opinions, feelings, and reflections than class discussions when one goes public. KA elaborated that generally "people felt freer in the journals to express their frustrations and their concerns than they did in the classroom [discussions]." TR and AC found safety in "taking out frustrations" during a trying four weeks. JL did not feel threatened in the journal because she knew there was "no right or wrong answers." DM was shielded in the journal from some of the harsh criticism she received in class when she exposed her ideas. No one stated that they found the dialogue journal to be an unsafe environment.

CONCLUSIONS

Importance of Mentorship

Although the dialogue journal may take time to set-up initially, such journals have the capability to allow both preservice teacher and teacher educator to work closely together (Bullough & Gitlin, 1989; Knowles, 1991) Within this important mentorship, the dialogue journal may function in many ways. The teacher educator can be privy to the internal dialogues of the student, can perceive what needs to be corrected, can ask students questions when elaboration of ideas is needed, can give positive feedback, and can exchange important dialogue. The student then can try out important ideas with the trusted facilitator, receive feedback, ask questions that the student may not want to voice in class, and can carry-on important dialogue. Journals can be an excellent way to communicate with the teacher-educator one on one in all of these functions.

Trust is also an important degree in the collaboration between student and teacher-educator. Degree of trust may be one characteristic that separates those students who value journal writing and those that do not. Fear of revealing oneself may be a barrier to journal writing because of the highly personal nature of sharing one's voice and interior dialogue with a trusted mentor.

Within this form of communication, the teacher-educator must also be perceived as cooperative rather than authoritarian in efforts to work closely with the student (Queen & Mallen, 1987). A non-threatening writing environment is important so as to not place too much concern on restricting a free exchange of ideas (Martin, 1991). Bullough & Gitlin (1989) have stated that it is important that both the student and teacher-educator feel they are both participants in this process.

Although students in this study felt comfortable asking the teacher-educator questions in the dialogue journal, generally more time was needed in the initial stages to show how both the preservice teacher and the teacher-educator could work more closely together. Most students would ask occasional questions of the teacher-educator when feedback was needed on "what-to-do-within-a-given" situation; however, the continual "conversation" was never established.

In this study, however, the teacher-educator could learn much about the student even without the continual "conversation" back and forth. The teacher-educator was still privy to the internal student dialogues, could tell which students were up-to-date on the readings and which were not, could give students additional help in understanding the material, could write notes to students to untangle misconceptions, and could give students continual feedback. Many (JL, SL, KA, AC) students found that the journal was an excellent way to communicate with the instructor one on one. For those students, the journal provided a safe environment with a trusted mentor that they could not find during class discussions. Even without the continual interchange of dialogue, the journal still functioned in many ways.

Importance of a Definition of Reflection

Students need a definition of reflection and need to be taught how to use reflection in their journals. The teacher educator cannot assume that students will automatically be able to produce such reflective writing. Research shows that both students and instructor need to come to a shared understanding of the meaning of "reflection" if journals are to show evidence of such cognitive activity and growth (Knowles,1991; Schmidt & Martin, 1991; Tom, 1985). Teachers need to articulate a definition of "reflection" making sure that it is understood and embraced equally by students (Knowles, 1991; Martin, 1991; Tom, 1985). Martin (1991) states that cognitive growth should be central to a definition of reflection. The need for a

shared definition of reflection within teacher education is crucial (Gore, 1987; Martin; 1991).

In this study, the researcher had assumed that students understood the definition of reflection and could produce reflective writing in journals. After analyzing the data in the journals, the researcher began to search for reasons as to why many students would not go beyond a basic knowledge of multicultural issues. The lack of a definition of "reflection" and modeling may be one such reason. A second reason may be the lack of time.

Even students who understand how to use reflection in journal writing may need to come to some collective understanding with other members of the class. During the initial phases of the class, the students and instructor may begin to learn an important lesson in collaboration. Engaging in meaningful dialogue allows students to get beyond the role of passive receivers where knowledge is transmitted, and into an active role where their voices may be heard.

Importance of Voice

Giving preservice teachers a voice, via the dialogue journal, is giving them the opportunity to share their internal dialogues, narratives, and voices with an interested listener. Such an opportunity allows students to note what they perceive as important from lectures, discussions, and readings, find out what they think, try out new ideas, and formulate their own beliefs through writing with a trusted facilitator (Knowles, 1991).

Language and thought, as the basic tools for the dialogue journal, involve the transformational power of the word. Freire (1985) discusses the importance of recapturing one's own history, of interpreting one's own experiences, of dialoguing with others, and of developing a critical consciousness to address difficult political questions in order to challenge a system that caters to the status-quo. Too often students become members of "the culture of silence"

in which they are not allowed to critically examine or challenge the educational system (Freire, 1973, p. 24). Through the dialogue journal, students may have the potential to break the "silence" in which thought and language may become the agents for change and self-empowerment. McLaren (1989) defines self-empowerment as:

> The process through which students learn to critically appropriate knowledge existing outside their immediate experience in order to broaden their understanding of themselves, the world, and the possibilities for transforming the taken-for-granted assumptions about the way we live. (p.186)

Vygotsky (1962) equates good writing with abstract thinking that must be translated to an intended audience. Writing relies on the cognitive process of "inner speech" in which words must be pulled apart, analyzed, and reworked into more explicit meaning. Through Vygotsky's (1978) "Zone of Proximal Development," the student may share one's voice of ideas, thoughts, beliefs, experiences with a trusted, capable professional. The dialogue journal may be one way that students have an opportunity to break the "silence" through written language in which students may broaden their understanding of complex social problems with the assistance of the teacher-educator.

Many students (JL, KA, SL, AC) commented on the importance of communicating with the instructor one on one. For several students (KA, SL, JL, DM), it was important that they were given the opportunity to share their ideas and concerns with a trusted mentor. Students reported that the journal could be used for "collecting thoughts," "for reflection," "for venting," "for synthesizing the materials," and for "critically" looking at the issues. One of the main functions that the journal served was that of a catalyst. In the beginning, the voices of the students were angry and full of anxiety. After reading the initial entries, the teacher-educator felt that the issues that concerned students must be discussed and solved before students could turn their attention to the course at hand. This was

the first opportunity that students had to break the "silence" since they had been forced into the new program in teacher education. (See Chapter Five) By voicing their anger, students would not continue to be victims of a "culture of silence," and would have the opportunity to take on a more active voice through the dialogue journal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The concept of the dialogue journal and the meaning of reflection must be discussed, defined, and modeled in the beginning of class and continuously if need be. By collectively coming to a definition of reflection, students already feel a part of an important interactive process. Giving examples of reflective writing would be important to any student that does not have the experience with such writing. Modeling the process of the interactive journal would help students to replace preconceived ideas of what is a journal.

2. Journal writing takes time and would be better in a class of 16 weeks where more time can be taken for reflection and sharing of entries could occur. Journals may not be beneficial in classes where time is limited.

3. Some students may need to think about a topic for a period of time before they write about it. Beginning writing exercises may be given during the first fifteen minutes of class and can be continued after class if and when students would like. Explaining to students that they may continue the topic in the evening may lessen the stress for many students.

4. Students need to write often and need to be encouraged to share their entries in class if the journal has the potential to become a thought-collector where students can process information, examine personal thoughts, and analyze complex social problems in the culturally pluralistic classroom.

5. Some students need more structured writing assignments; while other students abhor structure. Perhaps a balance of different assignments would help students become more aware of

which assignments they prefer and why. Such an awareness would reinforce the literature on learning styles.

6. Journaling as a tool for reflection is not for all students. Some students do not like to write. Or if they write, they prefer to use writing as a catharsis, not as a tool for reflection and synthesis. Others students prefer discussion. Teacher educators need to be sensitive to the fact that journal writing is not an effective tool for reflection for all students.

7. The dialogue journal may be particularly helpful with students who are far behind the rest of the class particularly if it is a safe place to paraphrase information and check out one's understanding within the confines of a trusted mentor. The dialogue journal may also benefit those that have not had an opportunity to take such a class or explore such issues in multicultural education.

8. The dialogue journal may provide a safe environment for students who do not like to speak up in class. Often such voices are never heard when teacher-educators do not provide other avenues for communication. The dialogue may also be less threatening than conferences held after class with the teacher-educator.

QUESTIONS THAT REMAIN

1. How can students be reinforced to go beyond basic knowledge by being more reflective of multicultural issues via the dialogue journal? Would a collective definition and examples of modeling reflective writing help?

2. Is the ability to write reflectively a developmental process or can all students write reflectively in the dialogue journal? If all students have the ability to write reflectively Is reflective writing associated with experience or interest?

3. Can all students be taught to use the dialogue journal as an ongoing, written "conversation" between the student and the instructor back and forth for an extended period of time? If not, does the individual's preconceptions of what a journal is often get in the way?

4. Do secondary majors find the journal to be more beneficial than elementary majors as are findings of Klenck (1991)? Is there more evidence of reflective writing found in the journals of secondary majors or elementary majors?

5. Do preservice teachers who write reflective journals make better teachers in the future classroom than those who do not?

6. What kind of questions are most conducive to more reflective responses?

7. Do more culturally sensitive students in multicultural education need the journal as much as students who are not as multiculturally sensitive?

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